



# Norfolk casino resort today released renderings of the \$500 million project.

The Pamunkey Indian Tribe has no experience operating any sort of gaming, but it nonetheless was selected by Norfolk as its preferred casino developer last year. Residents in the Hampton Roads city approved a single gaming license through a ballot referendum during last November's election.

The Pamunkey Tribe released renderings of the casino destination that highlight the project's components. A release says the Norfolk casino will feature a 300-room hotel, a rooftop bar, a waterside infinity pool, a full-service spa, a sportsbook, two restaurants, an outdoor event space, and multiuse indoor conference area. [홀짜게임](#)

"I'm confident that this project will exceed the expectations of everyone. It will be the destination of choice for gaming in Virginia," opined Robert Gray, chief of the Pamunkey Indian Tribe.

"We are living up to every promise we made and are determined to make this a project of which Norfolk can be proud," Gray added.

## Billionaire Backer

The Pamunkey Indian Tribe might itself have no history running a casino, but it has partnered with a businessman who's made a fortune in the gaming industry. The tribe has brought in billionaire Jon Yarbrough to help finance and design the half a billion-dollar casino. Forbes estimates Yarbrough's net worth at \$2.9 billion. The gaming veteran made his money by founding Video Gaming Technologies (VGT) in 1991. The firm specialized in Class II bingo-based gaming machines, which flourished as tribal casinos proliferated across the nation. He sold the business to Aristocrat Leisure in 2014.

Yarbrough Capital, his investment and holdings firm, partnered with the Pamunkys back in 2018. Virginia passed casino legislation in 2020 that allows troubled cities to hold local votes to determine if citizens want to use a casino to provide their city an economic spark.

I was introduced to the tribe by some people I had partnered with in a South Carolina tribe, and they set up a meeting. I first met with the chief, then a second time I met the council," Yarbrough told The Virginian-Pilot in 2018.

“It’s amazing that they’ve survived this long after being pushed back to basically this little island in the middle of a river,” Yarbrough added regarding the Pamunkey’s small reservation on the Pamunkey River. “They’re such great people and they have a dream of economic self-sufficiency.”

### Construction Soon Beginning

Norfolk is one of four cities in Virginia that has authorized a casino resort, the others being Portsmouth, Danville, and Bristol. Richmond voters will decide on a casino this fall.

The Pamunkey Indian Tribe says its casino will ideally be finished and ready to welcome guests in 2023. The resort is being built on 13.4 acres of land next to the Harbor Park baseball stadium.

The tribe purchased the vacant plot from the city for \$10 million following the ballot approval last November. City officials are using those funds to renovate the Booker T. Washington and Maury high schools.

The real money casino is forecast to generate between \$43 million and \$51.2 million annually for education through gaming revenue taxes, and another \$25 million local tax money for the City of Norfolk.